



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Virginia Literacy Act Advisory Group Members



Dawn Bacon

Dawn F. Bacon is the Elementary Director of Instruction for Lunenburg County Public Schools. She is a graduate of Longwood University, with a Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction and Administration. In addition, Mrs. Bacon is currently serving as the Region 8 Professional Development Council Chairperson. Over the past 36 years, she has had experience teaching grades K-4, serving as an elementary principal, and is now leading the literacy initiative in Lunenburg County Public Schools. Mrs. Bacon works closely with the literacy team, administrators, and reading specialists to implement best practices for reading instruction, data analysis of students' individual progress, and promoting a multi-tiered system of support. Mrs. Bacon is currently co-coordinating LETRS professional development for all teachers K-5. Under her leadership, Lunenburg County Public Schools is implementing a literacy plan and shifting reading instruction at the elementary level to align with research from the National Reading Panel and the VA Literacy Act.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Chelsey Bahlmann Bollinger

Dr. Chelsey M. Bahlmann Bollinger is currently an Assistant Professor in the Early, Elementary, and Literacy Education Department at James Madison University. She received her bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of North Carolina Greensboro, her Masters in language and literacy education from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and her Ph.D. in language and literacy education from the University of Georgia.

Dr. Bollinger began her teaching career as a first-grade teacher in Rocky Point, North Carolina and then moved to Bluffton, South Carolina where she taught third grade. Recently she was named the Sarah Miller Luck Endowed Professor for Excellence in Education for the 2022-2023 academic year. Her work has been published in *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *Excellence in Education*, *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *Reading in Virginia*, and others. Her research focuses on early and elementary literacy education, technology integration, professional learning, and children's literature.



Jacqueline Baker

Jacqueline Baker has worked in the field of education for over twenty-six years serving students in preschool through fifth grade. She currently works as an EL teacher for Loudoun County Public Schools and as the director of Classroom of Discovery, a nonprofit preschool.

Mrs. Baker holds a bachelor's in elementary education, a master's in multicultural/multilingual education, and a special education graduate certificate in specialized reading. She is currently working on a master's in reading at the University of Virginia.

Mrs. Baker is passionate about pursuing opportunities to increase her knowledge in the field of reading and has completed Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), Top 10 Tools, and Orton-Gillingham (OG).

As an educator and the parent of a teenager with dyslexia, Mrs. Baker has been advocating for scientifically based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction for over ten years. She served as the Chair of Loudoun County Public Schools' Dyslexia Subcommittee and as a member of their Specialized Reading Instruction Stakeholder Advisory Group. She has been



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Jacqueline Baker (cont.)

an advocate with Decoding Dyslexia Virginia and continues her advocacy as a board member and Activities Co-Chair for The Reading League Virginia.

Mrs. Baker grew up in Alaska and has lived in Virginia since 1993. She lives in Sterling, Virginia, with her husband, sixteen-year-old son, and family dog. She has a daughter in college at James Madison University and a son at Virginia Commonwealth University. She enjoys working out, educational podcasts, and binge-watching docuseries.



Krista Barton-Arnold

Executive Director of the Virginia Elementary Association of School Principals (VAESP)

Krista Arnold has been in education for 38 years. 36 years in Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS). Positions held in VBCPS included special education teacher, special education coordinator, principal, director of elementary education. In September of 2021, Krista became the Executive Director of VAESP.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Erika Berry

Erika lives in Front Royal with her husband, two kids, and three dogs. Teaching was something she always wanted to pursue. Ms. Berry earned a Bachelor's degree in psychology and a Masters degree in elementary education from the University of Mary Washington. During her thirteen years as an educator for Winchester Public Schools, she has been a 4th grade teacher, 1st grade teacher, K-2 teacher, and an instructional coach. Her current role is a multi classroom leader overlooking 3rd and 4th grade literacy. Other than teaching, she enjoys reading, exploring new places, being active, and making memories with her family.



Lori Bridi

Lori Bridi serves as the Chief Academic Officer for Fredericksburg City Public Schools. Mrs. Bridi has a Bachelor of Arts in English and Elementary Education from James Madison University, and she earned her master's degree in Administration and Supervision from the University of Mary Washington. Mrs. Bridi began her career in public education as a first-grade teacher and quickly developed a passion for early literacy instruction. She has served as an elementary reading specialist and a Reading Recovery teacher. During her time as an assistant principal, reading and writing achievement improved for students each year at the Title I, minority-majority school where she supervised literacy instruction. Mrs. Bridi has also served as the Division Director of Testing and the Director of Accountability in Fredericksburg. During this time, she solidified her commitment to alignment between the written, taught, and tested curriculum. As the Chief Academic Officer, Mrs. Bridi led the adoption of a new, research-based literacy program for the division and has participated in LETRS training in order to ensure literacy instruction is based on the science of reading. Her matriculation through division roles has allowed Mrs. Bridi to build a comprehensive picture of the value of literacy for all children



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Lori Bridi (cont.)

from preschool through graduation as part of our young people's transitions to becoming well-rounded citizens of the Commonwealth.



Tiffany Brutus

Tiffany Brutus is a proud "Double Duke," earning her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Health Sciences from James Madison University. Additionally, she has earned a post-master's certificate through JMU's College Student Personnel Administration program. Tiffany is a Ph.D. candidate in JMU's School of Strategic Leadership Studies at JMU. Over the past 16 years, she contributed to program development and academic support services as the Assistant Director of Student-Athlete Services at JMU. She now professionally serves JMU as a Research Development Associate coordinating strategic services and collaborative resources to support the institution's research initiatives, external funding opportunities, and broader impact. In addition, Tiffany has served on numerous committees across JMU's campus, including the Employee Advisory Committee, University Planning Team, Compensation Advisory Committee, and Diversity Taskforce. External to JMU, Tiffany is a tutor through an organization called Dyslexic Edge/Sliding Doors. She serves on the board of directors for the Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center, the PTI for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Harrisonburg City school district's Special Education Advisory Committee. Tiffany is passionate about research and action centered around wellness, literacy, innovation, strategy, and workforce development. She enjoys reading, traveling, learning new things, and supporting others.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Liza Burrell-Aldana

Dr. Liza Burrell-Aldana Rodriguez was appointed principal of Mount Vernon Community in 2017, after serving as an assistant principal for three years. Burrell-Aldana brings close to 30 years of experience as an educator, 13 of which have been spent as a teacher and instructional leader in dual language programs.

Dr. Burrell-Aldana was born in Colombia and graduated from Universidad del Valle in Cali with a bachelor's degree in foreign languages. She later was awarded a scholarship from the School for International Training in Vermont in order to complete a Master of Arts in teaching and went on to pursue a master's in education leadership from George Mason University. Dr. Burrell-Aldana also holds a professional certificate in Education Policy and Program Assessment from Georgetown University and a Doctoral degree in Education Leadership and Policy Studies from Virginia Tech University. Dr. Burrell-Aldana is currently serving in the Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted and the Virginia Literacy Advisory Group.



Danielle Colucci

My name is Danielle Colucci, and I currently serve as the Senior Executive Director of Elementary Schools in Virginia Beach City Public Schools. Previously, I have served as the Executive Director of Elementary Teaching and Learning, an elementary school principal, a language arts coordinator, assistant principal, reading interventionist and classroom teacher. It is an honor to work beside teachers and school administrators as they work to meet the needs of their students and communities. Literacy instruction has been a professional passion of mine since I became a teacher. I observed the diverse needs of the students in my classroom and recognized the critical need for all students to become proficient readers in order to be future ready and access multiple opportunities in school and in life. In 2018-2019, I was recognized as the Virginia State Reading Administrator of the Year by the Virginia State Reading Association and awarded the James D. Mullins Leadership Award for my efforts as a school administrator in the area of literacy instruction. Currently, I am working to obtain my doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Virginia Tech University. I am committed to the work required to ensure all students receive highly effective evidence-based literacy instruction so that all students can succeed. I look forward to engaging in this important work for our students.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Dwana Cooper

Dwana T. Cooper is a Special Education Instructional Supervisor at Newport News Public Schools where she provides professional learning and training in specially designed instructional best practices for instructors of students with disabilities. As a 30 plus year veteran in the area special education, she has assumed the roles of teacher, teacher leader, Transition Coordinator, Reading Specialist and District Level Administrator. She uses her knowledge of students with varying abilities to empower and educate others in evidence-based strategies and practices to improve academic outcomes.

Dwana's educational training includes degrees from Hampton University, The College of William and Mary and Old Dominion University. Her educational philosophy is that students flourish in a positive school climate that demands high standards for relevant and rigorous instruction, and that teachers encourage constructive relationships, cultivate resilience, honor cultural differences, and utilize evidence based practices to promote success for all students.



Megan Cornelius

Megan Cornelius serves as the Director of Teaching and Learning for Louisa County Public Schools. She oversees K-12 literacy instruction and gifted education. She began teaching 13 years ago in Washington County, Maryland. Her previous roles as an elementary Title I classroom teacher, PK-5 special education teacher, and instructional coach have led her to develop a passion for early literacy and curriculum design. She is trained in Orton-Gillingham, LETRS, and Wilson Reading. Her favorite part of her job is providing professional development to teachers on the science of reading. She is currently pursuing her doctoral degree in educational leadership through Virginia Tech. Megan lives in Glen Allen with her husband and four children.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Faye Covington-Bradley

Faye Covington-Bradley, Ed. D is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning in the College of Education at Virginia State University. She currently serves as the Program Coordinator of Elementary Education. Her recent research was on The Impact of Parental Involvement on the Reading Achievement of Fourth Grade African American Males in the Tidewater Region of Virginia.

Dr. Bradley earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education with an endorsement in Developmental Reading from Longwood College. She earned her Master of Education Degree in Reading, as well as an endorsement in Administration and Supervision from Virginia Commonwealth University. In addition, Faye matriculated at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, where she earned an Ed. D in Educational Leadership and Policy.

During her decades of service as a K-12 educator, Dr. Bradley was an accomplished elementary school principal, assistant principal, teacher specialist, reading specialist, and teacher who has experienced success with all children in rural, suburban, and urban school districts. She served as a K-12 “turn-around” instructional consultant and professional development practitioner for an underperforming school district.



Carrie Coyner

Carrie serves the people of Chesterfield, Prince George and Hopewell in the Virginia House of Delegates, where she is developing a reputation for working across the aisle on improving our schools, supporting veterans and their families, and helping our neighbors fighting the disease of addiction in their recovery journeys.

Carrie grew up in the Chester area, the same community she and her family still call home today.

Her parents taught her from a young age to love people through service – and that means actually doing something. Before being elected to the House of Delegates, Carrie served her community on the Chesterfield County School Board, as a Board leader for the Chesterfield County Chamber of Commerce, as a Board leader for the Chester YMCA, and on the Elizabeth Scott Elementary School PTA. She is currently a worship leader and a Sunday



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carrie Coyner (cont.)

school teacher at Chester United Methodist Church.

Carrie is a busy mom of three children, ages 13, 14 and 15. Like most families, Carrie juggles school, sports, and church all while trying to keep up with her day job. Carrie is the owner and founder of RudyCoyner Attorneys at law, where she practices business and real estate law for almost 20 years.



Grace Creasey

Mrs. Creasey is the Executive Director of the Virginia Council for Private Education, authorized by the Code of Virginia (22.1-19) to accredit private nursery, preschool, elementary, and secondary schools in the Commonwealth.

Mrs. Creasey has extensive experience in educational instruction, accreditation, administration, and policy. Mrs. Creasey earned an undergraduate degree in Government from Sweet Briar College and a Master of Education Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Richmond. Mrs. Creasey holds a Virginia Postgraduate Professional license in grades 6-12 Government/Civics, Gifted Education, and Administration & Supervision. She has over ten years of classroom teaching experience in Goochland County Public Schools and Norfolk Public Schools where she taught U.S. History, Civics, and Government. In addition to her classroom experience, Mrs. Creasey has served in both school leadership and administrative roles for an additional 8 years in both public and private schools in Virginia.

Mrs. Creasey served on the School Readiness Committee and Early Childhood Advisory Committee. She resides in Goochland County with her husband, Sheriff Steven Creasey, and their daughter.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Katie Dredger

Katie Dredger, Ph.D., is the Academic Unit Head of Middle, Secondary, and Mathematics Education at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. She teaches course in content area literacy, foundations of instructional planning, curriculum theory, and adolescent literature. She served as a secondary public school English Language Arts teacher for 13 years and has worked in higher education since 2006. She earned her M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from Loyola College of Maryland and her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Virginia Tech. She researches media and adolescent literacies through a lens of just and inclusive practices. She is the Virginia State Literacy Association's (VSLA) liaison to the Virginia Council of Teachers of English (VATE) where she works to understand seminal and emerging theory and practice that meets the needs of each learner. She lives with her family in Rockingham County and enjoys hiking, reading, traveling, and time with friends.

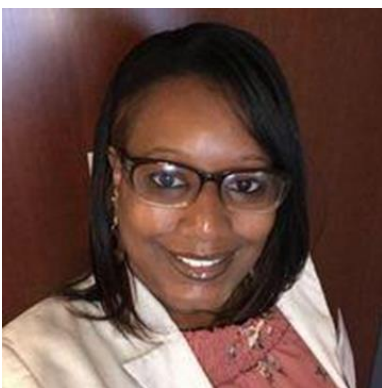


Diane Fernandez

Diane Fernandez's favorite firefighter is also her husband, Mark, and she is Mom to Drew (18), Sam (17), Faith (14), Jack (11), and Finley - the Dog (6). Currently she is a Reading Specialist for Prince William County Public Schools in Virginia. She began Reading Specialist courses in 2015, trying to learn knowledge and skills that would help her daughter who was a struggling reader at the time. She was surprised to find that none of the coursework was transferrable to helping her daughter become a proficient reader. This led her to seek out the training that the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) offered based on the Science of Reading. She completed this training in 2017 and began to co-facilitate teacher professional development based on the Science of Reading with George Mason University's Technical Training and Assistance Center (TTAC) through VDOE. Prior to becoming a Reading Specialist in 2017, Diane taught 2nd, 5th, and 6th grades. She earned her undergraduate degree from Saint Mary's College (Notre Dame, IN) and a M.ED from Marymount University. Diane also earned National Board Certification as an Early Childhood Generalist in 2008. She enjoys helping students develop habits that grow their hearts and minds and fostering a school and community environment that promotes communication, collaboration and appreciation for others.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Shikee Franklin

Shikee Franklin is an Alumni from Mercer County Head Start program in Trenton, New Jersey! She began her career in Head Start as a volunteer with The Improvement Association Head Start program. She was soon hired as a Teacher Assistant and expanded her experience in various capacities such as Summer School Teacher, Community Services Coordinator, Family Services Coordinator, and then Head Start Director for 10 years. Since 2017, Shikee has served as the Early/Head Start Director for Hampton Roads Community Action Program (HRCAP), the largest Head Start program in Virginia. Currently, she serves on several Statewide Committees and Boards including Virginia Head Start Association, School Readiness Committee, Early Care and Education Workgroup, and the Pre-School Development Grant Advisory Committee. She also serves on the National Community Action Partnership Head Start Task Force.

Shikee has been fortunate to collaborate with 10 of Virginia's Public School Divisions throughout Regions 1 & 2. She has built relationships with Local Education Agencies that lead to coordinated enrollment, single point of entry, collaboration classrooms, joint professional development, and other innovative partnerships. She has also developed and supervised a Parents as Teachers program under Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting.

Shikee received her undergraduate studies in Organizational Management at St. Paul's College, and graduate studies in Education at Central Michigan University. In 2017, she was honored by Inside Business as a recipient of the Top 40 under 40.



Diane Frye

Over the last twenty-one years, Diane has been privileged to work with students and teachers in a variety of K-5 settings. She has been a special education teacher and Title 1 Reading teacher. Currently, she is Chilhowie Elementary School's Reading Specialist and fulfills the role of Dyslexia Advisor for the district. Ms. Frye is certified through the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners at the Classroom Educator level and trained through the Associate Level. As her district's LETERS Facilitator, she has the opportunity to work with teachers by sharing her passion and knowledge of evidence-based literacy practices that



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Diane Frye (cont.)

are aligned with the Science of Reading to help students become proficient readers, and improving student outcomes.



Amanda Gillman

BA Communication Studies, Furman University
MEd Administration and Supervision, University of Virginia

Ms. Gillman is the K-6 Reading Coach for Wythe County Public Schools in southwest Virginia. Before stepping into this role, she spent several years as a 5th grade reading teacher and private tutor of students of all ages. Her passion is working with striving readers and supporting teachers to help them make the instructional match for all students. She is obtaining her certification as an Orton-Gillingham Classroom Educator and serving as the LETRS Coordinator for her district. Together with teachers and leaders from across Region VII, she has worked on curriculum and benchmark committees to improve teacher resources and student outcomes.

She also serves as the Co-Executive Director for the WCPS Foundation for Excellence, a non-profit organization that partners with the school system to provide in-school, after school, and summer enrichment programs for all WCPS students. Since its inception in 2004, the Foundation for Excellence has invested more than four million dollars directly into classrooms across the county for programs that promote literacy, STEAM, career readiness, and unique educational opportunities. They foster partnerships between the schools and the community through grants, outreach, and fundraising events.

She is also a mother of two little ones—a two year old and a two month old—and resides in the beautiful mountains of southwest Virginia.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Melissa Goodwin

Melissa Goodwin is a 22 year veteran of education, 18 of those years in Virginia. She currently serves as the English Language Arts (ELA) Supervisor for Chesapeake Public Schools. Prior to her service as ELA Supervisor, Dr. Goodwin was a curriculum coordinator and ELA teacher. She began her career working for the National Education Association in Washington, D.C., as NEA Student Program Chairperson where she led the national 50,000 member constituency group.

Dr. Goodwin has served on VDOE Standards of Learning Item and Test Review Committees, was an editor for the VDOE Secondary English Instruction Plans, and has presented at VDOE ELA conferences. She is a member of the Virginia Association of Supervision and Curriculum and Development and ASCD, the parent organization; the Virginia Association of Teachers of English and NCTE, the parent organization; and the Chesapeake chapter of the Virginia Literacy Association, and the VLA.

Dr. Goodwin earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education, English from Central Connecticut State University, her Master's Degree in Instructional Technology from Virginia Tech, and her Education Specialist and Doctor of Education degrees from The George Washington University.



Kara Halsey

In 2013, Ms. Halsey earned her bachelor's degree in English from Hollins University. From there, she began her teaching career at Salem High School where she taught English to a diverse group of 9th-12th graders. In 2018, she transitioned to Read Mountain Middle School to teach English to middle schoolers. Her passion for reading development is evident in every aspect of her teaching and leading. She finds joy in creating text sets and small group instruction to reach struggling readers, advanced readers, and everyone in between. In addition, she currently serves as the school's Vocabulary Coach and the Lead Clinical Faculty. Through this role, and alongside many talented colleagues, she has worked to form a baseline for classroom assessment practices for middle and elementary levels, all of which are based on the science of reading best practices. She looks forward to working to progress reading and literacy in Virginia.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Maria Hamilton

Maria Hamilton is a literacy coach at Prince Edward County Elementary School (PECES) in Farmville, Virginia. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from West Virginia University and her Reading Specialist endorsement from Longwood University. Maria is certified in LETRS and the Orton Gillingham approach, has completed training in the SIMS Word Mapping Learning Strategy, and has earned a Culturally Responsive & Inclusive Educator micro-credential from Radford University.

During the past twenty-two years, Maria has worked in Cumberland and Prince Edward counties. She taught kindergarten and first grade, co-taught special education inclusion, and was a reading interventionist. In addition, through Longwood University's Professional Studies department, Maria taught about literacy and brain research. Maria's research interests include early literacy foundations. She is the co-author of an article on sound-symbol associations and creating equity in literacy instruction, accepted by the VSLA for publication in *Reading in Virginia*, and presented on the same topic at the Virginia Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators conference. Maria also presented at the Journal of Literacy Innovation conference and Longwood University's Summer Literacy Institute on "Why is 'said' spelled like that?" 5 Responses That Bring Those Teachable Moments to Life.



Angela Innerbichler

Angela Innerbichler is a 3rd grade Language Arts teacher who values inclusion, collaboration, and communication. She earned a Bachelor's Degree from JMU and a Master's Degree in Literacy & Culture with a Reading Specialist Endorsement from Longwood University. In her 20 years as an elementary teacher in Powhatan County, Angela has experienced scaffolding instruction for a wide range of student ability and interest levels. She has participated in various committees for the division, including grading/report cards and curriculum writing. This past summer she helped create the division's Language Arts website.

Angela has a passion for differentiating instruction and meeting the needs of her diverse learners. The information shared from Science of Reading research and the instructional practices she is learning from LETRS training is changing the way she plans and implements daily reading and writing instruction. Angela is



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Angela Innerbichler (cont.)

excited to see the impact of the Virginia Literacy Act in the school systems, classrooms and students' progress.

Angela has five sons who all attend Powhatan County Public Schools ranging from a senior in high school to twins in the inclusive preschool program. She enjoys spending time with her family playing games and volunteering at her church on the worship teams in the adult and elementary environments.



Lauren Laspe

Ms. Laspe currently serves as an Elementary Special Education Department Chair in Fairfax County Public Schools. After graduating with her Bachelor's Degree in Special Education and Master's Degree in Elementary Education from High Point University she began fulfilling her passion of teaching and supporting students' developmental growth. She taught as a Special Educator for 7 years working with students with disabilities in grades Kindergarten through Third grade. In doing so, she implemented various evidence-based Reading programs. In terms of literacy instruction, she has implemented the reading program Orton Gillingham and seen great growth in students' phonological awareness skills and reading overall. She serves as the Lexia Lead at my school, supporting both teachers and students with the implementation of the blended learning program that accelerates the development of literacy skills. In addition to her primary job functions as a Special Education Department Chair, she serves as the Multi-tiered Systems of Support Coordinator for her school as well as the Academic Lead in Literacy. Currently she also serves as the Local Screening Chair for grades Preschool through 6th.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Benjamin Lewis

Dr. Benjamin Lewis is a native of the Tidewater Region of Virginia. A proud product of Chesapeake Public Schools, he attended Longwood University and earned a Bachelor of Music Education and a Master of Science in Special Education. After working as an elementary special education teacher for Amelia County Public Schools, Dr. Lewis continued his post-graduate studies and obtained a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Educational Leadership from Virginia Commonwealth University. He has held leadership positions as a special education coordinator, specialist, and administrator for Henrico County Public Schools and Chesterfield County Public Schools.

Currently, Dr. Lewis serves as Executive Director of Special Education for Roanoke City Public Schools. “I am humbled and thrilled to serve and contribute to the development of this landmark reading initiative. The children and families of Virginia will remain my focus, as my colleagues and I work to shape reading instruction for decades to come,” he says. Dr. Lewis resides in Roanoke County, Virginia with his spouse and their feline family of four.



Dana McCaleb

Dana McCaleb serves as the Vice Chair for the Botetourt County School Board and is a coordinator of instruction at the Training and Technical Assistance Center at Virginia Tech. She has been in the field of education for twenty-seven years. Dana earned her B.S. from Radford University and her M.Ed. from Lynchburg College.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Donna McConnell

Donna McConnell is currently the Elementary Language Arts Coordinator in Fairfax County Public Schools. Prior to this position she has been the Director of Literacy at Urban Teachers, an Elementary Language Arts Specialist in Arlington Public Schools, a reading specialist, an instructional coach, and a first grade classroom teacher. She holds an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from The George Washington University, a M.Ed. in Curriculum Development and Instructional Supervision, a M.Ed. in Elementary Literacy, and a B.S.Ed. in Elementary Education. In her spare time she enjoys teaching at the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at GW and spending time with her family.



Amy Painter

Residing in Luray in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, Dr. Amy Painter currently serves on the Page County School Board. As an educator of 23 years, Dr. Painter's professional background includes experience as a classroom teacher, school administrator, and division-level leadership, currently serving as the Director of Federal Programs for Rockingham County. With an educational background including a B.S. in Elementary Education, M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction, M.A. in Special Education, and an Ed.D. in Teacher Leadership and Administration, Dr. Painter understands the importance of a solid literacy foundation for Virginia's students.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Betsy Peters

Betsy Peters serves as the Senior Vice President of Youth Development for the YMCA Of Greater Richmond. In her role, she oversees strategic development and implementation of youth development initiatives for the Y. She has been with the YMCA of Greater Richmond since April of 2017. In her previous role, she served as Regional Vice President for the YMCA of the Triangle in Raleigh, N.C. Betsy has been working with the Y for 35 years.



Matthew Peterson

Prior to serving as the Executive Director of the John & Janice Wyatt Foundation, Matt was the Executive Director for Blue Ridge Habitat for Humanity in Winchester, Virginia from 2016-2019. Over his four years with Habitat, Matt was responsible for the large-scale growth of the affiliate and the overall improvement of the health and effectiveness of the organization as it scaled to serve more families in need with safe and affordable housing.

Before Habitat, Matt served as the Deputy to the President & CEO, as well as the Senior Manager for Volunteer Operations, at Project HOPE from 2007-2015. As a key member of the senior leadership team, Matt was responsible for broadening the impact of leadership in the execution of the organization's mission and strategic plan; and he managed the global volunteer and international disaster response program.

Prior to Project HOPE, Matt served as an active duty medical operations officer in the US Army from 1995 to 2004. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology (pre-med) from the University of Miami, FL in 1994 and his master's degree in International Affairs from the Yonsei University Graduate School of International Studies in Seoul, Republic of Korea in 2006. He also holds a Certificate in Project Management from Cornell University. Matt was born in West Berlin, Germany in 1972 and grew up in Tallahassee, Florida. He currently lives in Boyce, VA with his wife, Anne, and two children.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Shalies Taylor

Dr. Shalies Taylor currently serves as the principal of Florence Bowser Elementary in Suffolk, Virginia. Prior to this role, she served as an assistant principal, K-12 science supervisor, director of Tidewater Regional Governor's School, K-12 science specialist, middle and high school science teacher, and special education paraprofessional. Dr. Taylor received her Doctor of Education in leadership from Liberty University, as well as an Educational Specialist degree in leadership and a Master of Education in Teaching and Learning. In addition, she received her Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Old Dominion University.

Throughout her career, Dr. Taylor has had the opportunity to impact several areas of the field of education. She conducted research on culturally responsive classroom management and multicultural self-efficacy, and her research is published in the *Journal of Multicultural Education*. In addition, she presented at national and state conferences such as the National Association of Secondary School Principals Conference and the Association of Teacher Educators Conference.

In 2020, Dr. Taylor was selected as an ASCD Emerging Leader and was featured on Episode 109 of the In Awe Podcast. She is a visionary leader with a passion for student achievement, curriculum and instruction, and community engagement.

Tamra Vaughan



Dr. Tamra Vaughan is the Director of Academic Supports (Title III, K-2 Reading, Teacher Mentoring, VTSS/PBIS and Foreign Languages) for Martinsville City Public Schools. She holds an Ed.D. in Education Administration and Policy Studies from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, an Ed. S. in Administration and Leadership from the University of Virginia, a Reading Specialist M. Ed. from Averett University, and a B.A. in Elementary Education from Warner Southern University. She achieved National Board for Professional Teachers Certification in the area of Middle Childhood Generalist. She is a National and Local facilitator for Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS).



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Angela White

Angela Blevins White (Angie) is the Supervisor of Early Childhood Programs for Frederick County Public Schools. Her responsibilities include VPI coordinator, division contact for PALs and VKRP, and the early childhood VTSS coach. Mrs. White has been an early childhood teacher, a reading teacher, and an elementary school administrator. Her undergraduate degree is from VA Tech and she attended George Mason University for her MED in school leadership. The shift from balanced literacy to structured literacy has encouraged her to begin a doctoral program through the University of Virginia. She has two daughters, a stepson, and two grandsons, ages three and five. Mrs. White looks forward to serving on the VLA Advisory Work Group.